

Reporters Without Borders to lower America's ranking on press freedom, measured by government restrictions and threats against the news media.

We're now ranked right below Burkina Faso, one of the world's poorest countries.

This failure to speak up for peaceful protesters and journalists began at Trump's rallies, where his supporters threatened and committed actual violence against them. Since then, the United Nations has warned that the basic principle of peaceful protest is under attack in the United States. At least 19 states have introduced measures that would criminalize such protests.

The very least the President can do is make some sort of distinction between what is tolerated here and in Turkey. Yes, it's a NATO ally, and we have a complex relationship. But this is about protecting the freedom of speech and assembly, and basic rules of law in our own country.

The New York Times has publicly identified the culprits, and New Jersey Rep. Bill Pascrell is among those leading the bipartisan charge to hold them accountable. If we can't get to the thugs in Turkey, then the Trump administration should hold the diplomats here to account.

Think about the message it sends if the Turkish government escapes this without so much as a slap on the wrist. A truly populist President, a defender of American freedoms, would stick up for the people—not the jack-booted thugs.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H. Res. 354, condemning the violence perpetrated against peaceful protesters outside the Turkish Ambassador's residence during Turkish President Erdogan's visit last month. This timely and critically important measure was introduced by my good friend, and Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman, ED ROYCE.

Mr. Speaker, as representatives of the American people, we take a solemn oath to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic." This sworn commitment spurs us to speak out now after the violent attack last month on peaceful protesters in Washington, D.C. who were peacefully exercising their First Amendments rights.

On that day a group of peaceful demonstrators—including a resident from my home state of New Jersey, Ceren Borazan—gathered outside the Turkish Ambassador's residence to protest the policies of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Shortly after President Erdogan's arrival at the residence during his official visit to the United States, a contingent of his security guards, joined by some supporters, rushed across the street where the protesters were gathered. Before the demonstrators knew it, this group of thugs was upon them, throwing them to the ground and raining blows upon them.

By now we are all familiar with the shocking video images captured of men in dark suits, some with guns, and others in plainclothes mercilessly kicking protesters in their faces while they lie helplessly on the ground. Some demonstrators were outnumbered four to one by their assailants who punched and manhandled them until DC police intervened. When police stepped in, some attackers turned to assault our uniformed officers.

Among this group of protesters were Kurdish- and Armenian-Americans, members of minorities with a painful history of persecution and marginalization in their ancestral homelands. These individuals came to the

United States to seek the freedom and safety they were deprived in their lands of origin.

The United States and its Bill of Rights are a promise to these people that must not be broken. That members of the President's security detail and others felt they could attack these sacred rights with impunity should offend us all. That Erdogan would calmly watch the melee unfold—as video evidence shows—is as galling as it is unsurprising. Indeed, just a year ago his security detail was involved in an all-too-similar incident at a public event in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, the steps recommended by this measure should be urgently implemented. Among other things, the United States should charge and prosecute all those involved in the attack. The State Department should request a waiver of immunity for any Turkish officials charged and detained in connection with the incident. Finally, the United States should redouble its efforts to promote democracy and human rights in Turkey.

Mr. Speaker, this was a brutal physical assault on a group of peaceful demonstrators in our nation's capital and a brazen insult to all Americans. I urge my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join their voices and votes in strongly condemning this incident and calling for justice.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 354, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1700

IRAQ AND SYRIA GENOCIDE EMERGENCY RELIEF AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2017

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 390) to provide for emergency relief to victims of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes in Iraq and Syria, to provide accountability for perpetrators of these crimes, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 390

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Iraq and Syria Genocide Emergency Relief and Accountability Act of 2017".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria are persecuted groups, and the Secretary of State of State declared on March 17, 2016, that Daesh, also known as the

Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), was responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and other atrocity crimes against several of these groups, including Christians and Yazidis.

(2) According to the Department of State's annual reports on international religious freedom, the number of Christians living in Iraq has dropped from an estimated 800,000 to 1,400,000 in 2002 to fewer than 250,000 in 2015, and the number of Yazidis living in Iraq has dropped from 500,000 in 2013 to 350,000 to 400,000 in 2015.

(3) The annual reports on international religious freedom further suggest that Christian communities living in Syria, which had accounted for between eight and ten percent of Syria's total population in 2010, are now "considerably" smaller as a result of the civil war, and that the population of approximately 80,000 Yazidis in 2010 may now be larger because of refugees from Iraq.

(4) Local communities and entities have sought to mitigate the impact of violence directed against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria, including the Chaldean Catholic Archdiocese of Erbil (Kurdistan Region of Iraq), which has used private funds to provide assistance to internally displaced Christians, Yazidis, and Muslims throughout the greater Erbil region, while growing needs and diminishing resources have made it increasingly difficult to continue these efforts.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Homeland Security, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

(2) FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATION.—The term "foreign terrorist organization" means an organization designated by the Secretary of State as a foreign terrorist organization pursuant to section 219(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189(a)).

(3) HUMANITARIAN, STABILIZATION, AND RECOVERY NEEDS.—The term "humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs", with respect to an individual, includes water, sanitation, hygiene, food security and nutrition, shelter and housing, reconstruction, medical, education, and psychosocial needs.

(4) HYBRID COURT.—The term "hybrid court" means a court with a combination of domestic and international lawyers, judges, and personnel.

(5) INTERNATIONALIZED DOMESTIC COURT.—The term "internationalized domestic court" means a domestic court with the support of international advisers.

SEC. 4. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States to ensure that assistance for humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs of individuals who are or were nationals and residents of Iraq or Syria, and of communities from those countries, is directed toward those individuals and communities with the greatest need, including those individuals from communities of religious and ethnic minorities, and communities of religious and ethnic minorities, that have been identified as being at risk of persecution, forced migration, acts of genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes.

SEC. 5. ACTIONS TO PROMOTE ACCOUNTABILITY IN IRAQ AND SYRIA FOR ACTS OF GENOCIDE, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, AND WAR CRIMES.

(a) **ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development are authorized to provide assistance, including financial and technical assistance, as necessary and appropriate to support the efforts of entities, including nongovernmental organizations with expertise in international criminal investigations and law, to undertake the following activities to address crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes, and their constituent crimes, in Iraq since January 2014:

(1) The conduct of criminal investigations.

(2) The development of indigenous investigative and judicial skills, including by partnering, directly mentoring, and providing equipment and infrastructure where necessary, for the purpose of effectively adjudicating cases consistent with due process and respect for the rule of law.

(3) The collection and preservation of evidence and the chain of evidence, including for use in prosecutions in domestic courts, hybrid courts, and internationalized domestic courts, consistent with the activities described in subsection (b).

(b) **ACTIONS BY FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS.**—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Attorney General, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, shall encourage governments of foreign countries—

(1) to include in appropriate security databases and security screening procedures of such countries information to identify individuals who are suspected to have committed crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes, and their constituent crimes, in Iraq or Syria, including individuals who are suspected to be members of foreign terrorist organizations operating in Iraq or Syria; and

(2) to prosecute such individuals for acts of genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes, as appropriate.

(c) **CONSULTATION.**—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary of State shall consult with and consider credible information from entities described in such subsection.

SEC. 6. IDENTIFICATION OF AND ASSISTANCE TO ADDRESS HUMANITARIAN, STABILIZATION, AND RECOVERY NEEDS OF CERTAIN PERSONS IN IRAQ AND SYRIA.

(a) **IDENTIFICATION.**—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, and Director of National Intelligence, shall seek to identify the following:

(1) The threats of persecution and other early-warning indicators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes against individuals—

(A) who are or were nationals and residents of Iraq or Syria, are members of religious or ethnic minority groups in such countries, and with respect to which the Secretary of State has determined ISIS has committed acts of genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes since January 2014; or

(B) who are members of other religious or ethnic minority groups in Iraq or Syria and are identified by the Secretary of State as persecuted groups.

(2) The religious and ethnic minority groups in Iraq or Syria identified pursuant to paragraph (1) that are at risk of forced migration, within or across the borders of Iraq, Syria, or a country of first asylum, and the primary reasons for such risk.

(3) The humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs of individuals described in

paragraphs (1) and (2), including the assistance provided by the United States and by the United Nations, respectively, to address the humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs, and mitigate the risks of forced migration, of individuals described in paragraphs (1) and (2) and assistance provided through the Funding Facility for Immediate Stabilization and Funding Facility for Expanded Stabilization.

(4) To the extent practicable and appropriate, the entities, including faith-based entities, that are providing assistance to address the humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs of individuals described in paragraphs (1) and (2) and the extent to which the United States is providing assistance to or through such entities.

(b) **ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION.**—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary of State shall consult with, and consider credible information from, individuals described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of such subsection and entities described in paragraph (4) of such subsection.

(c) **ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development are authorized to provide assistance, including financial and technical assistance as necessary and appropriate, to support entities described in subsection (a)(4) that the Secretary and Administrator determine have access, and are capable of effectively managing and delivering such assistance, to the individuals described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of such subsection.

SEC. 7. REPORTS.

(a) **IMPLEMENTATION REPORT.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the following:

(1) A detailed description of the efforts taken, and efforts proposed to be taken, to implement the provisions of this Act.

(2) An assessment of the feasibility and advisability of prosecuting individuals for whom credible evidence exists of having committed acts of genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes in Iraq since January 2014 or Syria since March 2011 in domestic courts in Iraq, hybrid courts, and internationalized domestic courts, and of the measures needed to ensure effective criminal investigations of such individuals, and to effectively collect and preserve evidence, and preserve the chain of evidence, for prosecution.

(3) Recommendations for legislative remedies and administrative actions to facilitate implementation of this Act.

(b) **FORM.**—The report required under this section shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex if necessary.

SEC. 8. PROHIBITION ON ADDITIONAL FUNDING.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act. This Act shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by recognizing the efforts of our colleague, Mr. SMITH. Mr. SMITH of New Jersey is chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations. We appreciate his strong leadership on this critical issue. And, as always, I also appreciate Ranking Member ENGEL for his support.

Mr. Speaker, more than 6 years ago, the world watched with dread as Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad ordered action against what were peaceful protestors coming down the main boulevard in Damascus. We watched on CNN and international television. As they were saying it was peaceful, we then saw the automatic weapons of the regime open up and mow them down. What has followed has been year after year of mass atrocities as Assad seeks to break the Syrian people.

Building on the vacuum created by Assad, ISIS burst onto the international stage in 2014 by declaring themselves and their supposed “caliphate”—and committing obscene, horrific acts in an effort to spread their nihilistic, death-filled ideology.

We also saw that they targeted anyone unlucky enough to cross their path across Syria and Iraq. Yet, oddly enough, the regime in Syria did not target ISIS. They were too busy carrying out their campaign against the people of Syria—protesters, the Free Syrian Army, and others—who were pushing back against the regime.

Here, alongside the nightmare that Assad created, came this new nightmare of ISIS. These two evils, as I call them, ISIS and Assad, exist side by side, perpetrating extreme violence on anyone who would oppose their grip on power.

ISIS is committing genocidal violence against Yazidis and Christians in Syria and Iraq, seeking to destroy their entire communities and to erase their shared histories. Assad is committing massive crimes against humanity, targeting men, women, and children from all sects, all religions, and all groups, as documented by Caesar, a military photographer who snuck out photos of what goes on in Assad’s prisons, documenting the torture and death of tens of thousands of citizens in Syria.

More than a year after the Obama administration, under intense congressional pressure, finally declared that ISIS’ actions against the religious communities of Iraq and Syria constituted “genocide,” there is still an urgent need for assistance to these vulnerable communities. These communities, which exist on the outskirts in Syria and on the borders, have been devastated by ISIS’ efforts to wipe them out.

These ancient communities, whose roots go back centuries, include Christians, Yazidis, Assyrians, Syrians, Turkomans, and many others. Their presence in Iraq and Syria is crucial to the social fabric of these nations.

While the U.S. has been generous in providing assistance to those targeted, their needs are still urgent and extreme. Whole communities have been displaced, enslaved, and slaughtered. Survivors need assistance in feeding and clothing their families and in beginning to address the extreme trauma caused by ISIS and Assad.

This bill offers additional immediate relief for these vulnerable communities and also directs the State Department to do more to support efforts to collect and preserve evidence of “genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes” so that, someday, justice might be served.

I urge Members to support this bill so that the possibility of justice and accountability for these atrocities can give hope to those suffering today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, April 24, 2017.

Hon. EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I write with respect to H.R. 390, the “Iraq and Syria Genocide Emergency Relief and Accountability Act.” As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions within H.R. 390 that fall within the rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, I forego any further consideration of this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 390 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation and that our committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation and asks that you support any such request.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 390 and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 390.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, April 24, 2017.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 390, the Iraq and Syria Genocide Emergency Relief and Accountability Act of 2017, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this resolution or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 390 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the resolution. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this measure.

I, again, want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL, who have worked in a bipartisan way to bring this important measure before us today. I would also like to thank Mr. SMITH and Ms. ESHOO for their work on this bill, the Iraq and Syria Emergency Genocide Act, and for their tireless efforts on behalf of religious minorities in the Middle East. It is often easy to look away in the face of these atrocities, Mr. Speaker, but these lawmakers have made sure that we stay focused on preventing genocide and promoting accountability in this part of the region.

On March 17, 2016, Secretary of State John Kerry said: “In my judgment, ISIS is responsible for genocide against groups and areas under its control, including Yazidis, Christians, and Shia Muslims . . . the United States will strongly support efforts to collect, document, preserve, and analyze the evidence of atrocities, and we will do all we can do to see that these perpetrators are held accountable.”

The House had urged the Secretary to designate the crimes against minorities in Iraq and Syria as “genocide,” and the measure before us today follows up on those efforts. It is tragic that a bill like this remains necessary. Unfortunately, ISIS continues to target religious minorities, including Christians, Yazidis, and Shia.

We have seen overwhelming evidence of forced migration, execution, rape, starvation, enslavement, amputation, and public lashings. In Raqqa, which ISIS has declared capital of the caliphate, children are forced to watch videos of mass executions in order to desensitize them to this level of violence.

ISIS remains an ongoing threat, and its campaign of violence and persecution is an ongoing tragedy for the people across the region. This bill would respond to that part of the challenge. It states that American assistance for humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery should go to those individuals and communities with the greatest need. That includes communities of religious and ethnic minorities.

The bill also will help ensure that those responsible for this violence and persecution are brought to justice. It pushes USAID to assist in the efforts to conduct criminal investigations and help develop skills on the ground to collect evidence and press these cases.

This legislation is supported by the Knights of Columbus, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, HIAS, Yazidi Human Rights Organization-International, and several other organizations.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the author of this bill and also the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished chairman for yielding, and I thank him for his leadership on this bill. I want to thank Ranking Member ENGEL for his support and also Majority Leader MCCARTHY for making sure this bill came to the floor. Without that, we wouldn't be here, so I want to thank him especially for his support.

Mr. Speaker, I start off by saying that, since 2013, I have chaired nine congressional hearings focused in whole or in part on atrocities in Iraq and Syria. The distinguished chairman has had another dozen or so such hearings that have brought to light these atrocities.

In one of our hearings in December of 2015, Gregory Stanton, president of Genocide Watch, testified that “weak words are not enough,” noting that 21 human rights organizations, genocide scholars, and religious leaders wrote to President Obama imploring him to recognize the ISIS genocide.

At that same hearing, Chaldean Bishop Francis Kalabat said that “since the fall of Mosul in early June 2014, Christians have endured targeted persecution in the form of forced displacement, sexual violence, and other human rights violations.” He said, “ISIS has committed terrific atrocities against the Yazidis,” and then he bottom-lined it and said the Christians are “under threat of extinction.”

On May 9, 2016, the House passed JEFF FORTENBERRY's genocide resolution 393-0. A few days later, Secretary of State John Kerry declared ISIS atrocities to be a genocide.

The existential threat to Christians and Yazidis and other minority faiths, however, continues to this day. Some of the fortunate ones have made it to the relative safety of Erbil but, astonishingly, have gotten no assistance from the United States Government.

Since 2014, as a matter of fact, the Chaldean Catholic Archdiocese of Erbil has provided almost all of the medical care, food, shelter, and education received by over 13,200 Christian families,

almost one-third of the Christians remaining in Iraq, who escaped ISIS. The archdiocese also provides assistance to Yazidis and Muslims. The funding for all of this has been private, with money from Knights of Columbus, Aid to the Church in Need, and a few others.

Carl Anderson, Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, which has donated more than \$12 million to the effort, testified in one of my hearings and said the Knights and other private sources have responded. "But non-governmental organizations can only do so much."

"The rich tapestry," as he pointed out, "of religious pluralism in the region must be preserved now or it will be lost forever," noting that there has been an 80 percent decline of Christians in Iraq and 70 percent in Syria.

He said: "With its loss will come increased instability and threats to our own security and that of the world."

"We have a unique opportunity—and, some would say, unique responsibility—to protect the victims of genocide."

Mr. Speaker, just before Christmas of last year, I traveled to Erbil with a staff delegation at the invitation of the Chaldean archbishop, Bashar Warda, to meet with survivors and to visit an internally displaced person camp of about 6,000 individuals. Both my staff and I were amazed and inspired by the genocide survivors' resiliency and deep faith in the Lord, despite the cruelty that they had endured.

□ 1715

There was so much joy, love, and courage despite the loss of family and friends to ISIS. They had deep hope. The children sang Christmas carols—it was December 23 when we were there—with smiles and with reverence. The leaders, especially Archbishop Warda, trusted in God while working unceasingly and unselfishly for others.

Because the needs on the ground have always exceeded private support, the archdiocese has had to battle chronic funding crises over these last several years. Archbishop Warda told me recently that they had to temporarily suspend their distribution of medicines, and are on track to run out of money for food sometime this June.

H.R. 390 provides authority and direction to the secretary and the administrator of USAID to identify the humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs of these communities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 2 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. This bill also authorizes and directs the secretary to fund entities, including faith-based ones, that are effectively providing assistance to meet those needs on the ground.

It addresses another urgent aspect of this crisis: evidence linking specific

ISIS perpetrators to specific atrocity crimes that is being destroyed or lost. And we have seen this in the past in Rwanda, in Sierra Leone, and in the former Yugoslavia. You have got to collect the information that is actionable in order to prosecute these crimes against humanity. This legislation directs that, and that is why it has the support of all four former U.S. Ambassadors at Large for war crimes issues.

It also directs the Secretary of State to work with foreign governments to ensure that they are including identifying information about suspected perpetrators in their security databases and security screening and are prosecuting perpetrators of these horrific crimes.

President Trump and Vice President PENCE have strongly, publicly, and repeatedly committed the administration to providing relief to Christians, Yazidis, and other genocide survivors. This legislation tangibly supports this commitment and is a blueprint for action.

I especially want to thank tonight the coauthor of this legislation, ANNA ESHOO. Her tireless efforts on behalf of all Christians and other persecuted religious minorities has been really fantastic, and I want to thank her for that and for working so cooperatively together with me and my staff and the full committee staff.

I would also like to thank the great staff work of Nathaniel Hurd, Piero Tozzi in my office, Matt McMurray in ANNA ESHOO's office, Doug Anderson and Joan Condon in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and Roger Mahan and Luke Murry in the majority leader's office. And, as always, I want to thank Kelly Dixon, who ultimately helped us bring this legislation to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the statement of Mr. Carl A. Anderson before the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations.

OPENING STATEMENT OF MR. CARL A. ANDERSON, SUPREME KNIGHT, KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

(Before the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health Global Human Rights and International Organizations of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, at a hearing titled The ISIS Genocide Declaration: What Next?, May 26, 2019)

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this subcommittee and to discuss the next steps that need to be taken needed to protect the survivors of ongoing genocide in Iraq and Syria. Let me begin by saying that the House of Representatives, the State Department and the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom are all to be commended for the important step of declaring the situation confronting Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East genocide.

The world's greatest humanitarian crisis since World War II is unfolding now in the Middle East. In addition to millions of refugees, many of the region's indigenous communities now face extinction. These communities may disappear in less than a decade. But their fate is not inevitable. The United States can avert this unfolding tragedy.

A UNIQUE HISTORICAL MOMENT

Around the world, people of good will, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, wish to differentiate themselves from the horrific and violent theology espoused by ISIS.

It is certainly true that such extremists make up a small percentage of Muslims overall. But among the world's billion Muslims, the majority simply want to raise their families in peace and are scandalized by what ISIS is doing in the name of Islam.

Prominent Islamic leaders and scholars from around the world have recently taken an important step in the Marrakesh Declaration. Attempts such as this, which seek to align Islam with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should be supported.

At the same time, it is clear that Christians, and other indigenous minorities, are experiencing genocide, at the hands of the Islamic State and related groups. Their plight is now at the top of the world's agenda in a way that it never has been before.

These factors together create an unparalleled opportunity for the United States, and for all those opposed to ISIS' radical vision—Muslims and non-Muslims alike—to advance an agenda of equality, justice, peace, and accountability in the region.

SIX PRINCIPLES FOR SOUND POLICY IN THE REGION

The United States can avert the extinction of indigenous religious and ethnic communities in Iraq and Syria with a policy that contains the following six principles:

(1) Increase aid and ensure that it actually reaches those most in need;

We are reliably informed that official government and U.N. aid does not reach the Christian genocide survivors in Iraq and Syria.

Repeatedly, we hear from Church leaders in the region that Christians—and other genocide survivors—are last in line for assistance from governments. Significantly, the Archdiocese of Erbil, where most Iraqi Christians now live, receives no money from any government whatsoever. If assistance from outside Church affiliated agencies ends in Erbil, Christians there will face a catastrophic humanitarian tragedy within 30 days. The situation is similar in Syria, according to Christian leaders there.

Those who face genocide are a tiny fraction of the population. They often must avoid official refugee camps because they are targeted for violence there by extremists. As a result, these minorities often do not get "official" aid. This will continue to be the reality unless specific action is taken to bring the aid to where these minorities are forced to reside by continuing violence.

The Knights of Columbus and others private sources have responded to this situation. Since 2014, we have raised more than \$10.5 million for relief, assisting Christians and other internally displaced persons and refugees in Iraq, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon. We have partnered with dioceses and religious agencies working in the region to provide general relief, food, clothing, shelter, education, and medical care. In doing so we assist both Christians and non-Christians. We are also working with church entities to ensure that they are making use of all government or U.N. resources available.

But non-governmental organizations can only do so much. Government aid is essential to the long-term survival of these indigenous religious and ethnic minorities. It is urgent that Congress appropriate funding to save those who have escaped genocide. I urge you to consider special emergency appropriations, however modest, to improve the humanitarian conditions on the ground in Iraq.

This funding, whatever the vehicle, should come with mechanisms in place—reporting

requirements and oversight—to ensure that American aid does not get diverted from its intended purpose.

(2) Support the long-term survival in the region of these ancient indigenous religious and ethnic communities;

In Iraq, the Christians population has declined by more than 80 percent, and in Syria by nearly 70 percent.

American policy should recognize the important differences in the situations of those fleeing violence and those targeted for genocide. And we should prioritize the latter.

Consider this analogy. After World War II, there were approximately 50 million refugees, and only a small fraction were Jews. Yet the world understood that Jews, who had survived genocide, faced a qualitatively different situation, and deserved heightened consideration.

The same is true today for the indigenous religious and ethnic minorities of the region. They have an indisputable right to live in their country—in whatever region of it they wish. Depending on the circumstances, this may mean where they are originally from, or where they find themselves now, but as survivors of an ongoing genocide, they deserve to be prioritized, not left behind by American policy decisions.

(3) Punish the perpetrators of genocide and crimes against humanity;

The United States should support action by the U.N. Security Council to refer key perpetrators of genocide for prosecution. Equally important, we should support the Iraqi Central Government and the Kurdish Regional Government's adjudication of the cases of thousands of ISIS fighters and supporters who currently remain in local detention centers.

As the population of captured ISIS fighters increases, local detention centers and jails risk becoming their own humanitarian issue. The need to improve this situation cannot be overstated.

Additionally, although substantial evidence of genocide exists, the United States should cooperate in taking further action to develop additional documentation and preservation before physical evidence is lost. Appropriations intended to assist in the adjudication of ISIS fighters will be critical in the coming months.

(4) Assist victims of genocide in attaining refugee status.

A news report last week indicated that of the 499 Syrian refugees admitted to the U.S. in May, not one was listed as being Christian or as explicitly coming from any of the groups targeted for genocides. How long will this situation be allowed to continue?

The U.S. should appropriate funding and work with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees to make provisions for locating and providing status to individuals—such as Yazidis and Christians—that have been targeted for genocide. Many of these genocide survivors fear going into official U.N. refugee camps, where they are targeted. Thus they are overlooked, and find it nearly impossible to acquire official refugee status or immigrate.

Congress should act now. Senator Tom Cotton has introduced the Religious Persecution Relief Act, S. 2708, to provide for overlooked minorities in the prioritization of refugees. We support this bill and urge its passage.

(5) Prepare now for foreseeable human rights challenges as ISIS-controlled territory is liberated by ensuring that Christians and other minorities have equal rights to decide their future;

We should prepare now for the consequences of the liberation of ISIS controlled areas, including Mosul and the Nineveh Region, as well as regions in Syria. We are like-

ly to see another humanitarian crisis as civilians flee the fighting or return to their former communities when fighting ceases.

There has been much debate concerning plans for victims of genocide in Iraq. Some have argued for returning people safely to the Nineveh Region, others that they should be allowed to stay in Kurdistan, still others that they be allowed to immigrate. But these are not necessarily mutually exclusive, competing proposals. People should be allowed to decide their own future. And when they do, we should work to ensure they are treated with fairness, dignity and equality. This also means that it will be increasingly important to ensure that the property rights and claims of minority groups are respected.

(6) Promote the establishment of internationally agreed upon standards of human rights and religious freedom as conditions for humanitarian and military assistance.

The United States should advocate for full and equal rights for religious and ethnic minorities in the region in exchange for our military and humanitarian aid. A necessary first step to prevent genocide is to overcome the social and legal inequality that is its breeding ground.

Religious hatred, discrimination and second-class citizenship too often constitute a way of life in the region—and it is a way of life that is an antecedent to genocide. We cannot accept one standard for human rights in the region and another standard for the rest of the world.

The guarantees in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—and the First and Fourteenth amendments to our own constitution—regarding equality under the law and freedom of speech and religion must become a reality for all citizens of Iraq, Syria and elsewhere throughout the region.

CONCLUSION

The rich tapestry of religious pluralism in the region must be preserved now or it will be lost forever. With its loss will come increased instability and threats to our own security and that of the world.

We have a unique opportunity—and some would say, unique responsibility—to protect the victims of genocide. The United States can provide such protection with a policy that includes the principles outlined above. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for your leadership and that of the members of this subcommittee.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

The only way for the people of Iraq and Syria to find peace and stability in the coming years is to move towards more inclusive governing, ensuring that minorities have a stake in the way their countries are run, and for those responsible for violence to face justice. It is as simple as that.

This legislation is a recognition that there are no military solutions in the Middle East; rather, the best way forward is to address the underlying causes that led to the creation of ISIS so we can prevent the next ISIS from rising up from the ashes in Iraq and Syria.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Just in speaking about the conditions of the Christian community, outside of Erbil, like Chairman SMITH, I

had the opportunity last year to speak to Archbishop Warda and to many of those Christian families that have survived, and to see many of the children that are struggling there.

I did want to commend the Knights of Columbus, the archbishop, and Catholic Charities for their sustained effort, which goes not only to this Christian community, but also the neighboring Yazidi community. These communities have no other means of support.

I think that as we reflect upon this, beyond the genocidal actions of ISIS, we have also seen the depravity of the Assad regime, which has engaged in a massive effort to destroy anyone, regardless of sect or religion or ethnicity, if they suspect them of being unwilling to bow to Syria's murderous dictator. None are safe.

I say "suspect" because so many of those who were tortured to death to give up other names are simply caught up in a web of intelligence services who go out and try to find those who they believe may not be loyal. And they haul them in for torture. And under the knife, many of these people will give up names of other families, whoever they can remember, whoever they know who may or may not in any way be involved in politics, but then find themselves in those same torture chambers.

The result of this kind of a society year after year breeds a sense of absolute hopelessness, of blowback, of problems throughout Syria from which, I must say, I suspect this long climb back is going to be a very difficult one.

At the end of the day, though, it is still absolutely imperative that those responsible for those hideous crimes be held accountable. A key aspect of any lasting peace is going to be accountability, because a renewal of trust and the prospect of justice is going to be based on some measure on whether we are going to hold to account those who committed those kinds of crimes, those who led to this kind of horror. Whether it is Assad's regime or whether it is ISIS, there is so much devastation left in the wake.

I urge Members to support this resolution so that the possibility of peace can be sustained by the hope that justice will prevail. I again thank Mr. SMITH for authoring this measure. I also thank Ranking Member ENGEL for his passionate leadership on the crisis in Syria for so many years.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, since 2013, I have chaired nine Congressional hearings focused, in whole or in a large part, on atrocities in Iraq and Syria.

At one hearing in December of 2015, Professor Gregory Stanton, President of Genocide Watch testified that "weak words are not enough" noting that twenty one human rights organizations, genocide scholars, and religious leaders wrote to President Obama imploring him to recognize the ISIS genocide.

At the same hearing, Chaldean Bishop Francis Kalabat testified that "since the fall of

Mosul in early June 2014, Christians have endured targeted persecution in the form of forced displacement, sexual violence, and other human rights violations.” He said “ISIS has committed horrific atrocities against the Yazidis.” The bishop said Christians are “under threat of extinction.”

On May 9, 2016, the House passed Jeff Fortenberry’s Genocide resolution 393 to 0. A few days later, Secretary of State John Kerry declared ISIS atrocities to be a genocide.

The existential threat to Christians and Yazidis and other minorities continues to this day. Some of the fortunate ones, however, have made it to relative safety in Erbil but astonishingly have not gotten assistance from the United States.

Since 2014, the Chaldean Catholic Archdiocese of Erbil has been providing almost all of the medical care, food, shelter and education received by 13,200 Christian families, almost one third of Christians remaining in Iraq, who escaped ISIS. The Archdiocese also provides assistance to Yazidis and Muslims. The funding has been private—Knights of Columbus, Aid to the Church in Need, and a few others.

Carl Anderson, Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus—which has donated more than \$12 million to the effort—testified that the Knights and other private sources have responded, “But non-governmental organizations can only do so much.” He also made numerous recommendations including supporting the “Long term survival in the region of these ancient indigenous religions and ethnic communities. In Iraq, the Christian population has declined by more than 80 percent, and in Syria, it has declined by almost 70 percent . . . The rich tapestry of religious pluralism in the region must be preserved now or it will be lost forever.” He said, “With its loss will come increased instability and threats to our own security and that of the world. We have a unique opportunity—and some would say, unique responsibility—to protect the victims of genocide.”

Just before Christmas last year, I travelled to Erbil at the invitation of the Chaldean Catholic Archbishop of Erbil, Bashar Warda, to meet with survivors and visit an IDP camp.

Both my staff and I were amazed and inspired by the genocide survivors resiliency and deep faith in the Lord despite the cruelty they endured.

There was much joy, love, and courage despite the loss of family and friends to ISIS. They had hope. The children sang Christmas carols with smiles and reverence.

The leaders—especially Archbishop Warda—trust in God while working unceasingly for others.

Because the needs on-the-ground have always exceeded private support, however, the Archdiocese has had to battle chronic funding crises. Archbishop Warda told me they recently had to temporarily suspend their distribution of medicines and are on-track to run out of money for food sometime this June.

H.R. 390 provides authority and direction to the Secretary and Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development to identify the humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs of these communities. The bill also authorizes and directs the Secretary and Administrator to fund entities—including faith-based ones—that are effectively providing assistance to meet those needs on-the-ground.

H.R. 390 addresses another urgent aspect of this crisis: Evidence linking specific ISIS perpetrators to specific atrocity crimes is being destroyed or lost. It is vital that evidence that can be used in a range of court settings is collected and preserved. This will enable accountability and support our efforts to counter terrorist groups by demonstrating that the perpetrators are chronic rapists, child abusers, drug dealers and human traffickers.

This legislation authorizes and directs the Secretary and Administrator to fund entities that are conducting criminal investigations into perpetrators of atrocity crimes in Iraq.

The Commission for International Justice and Accountability is an example of a non-governmental organization that has been conducting such criminal investigations on-the-ground. CIJA has collected and preserved ISIS recruitment forms, foreign fighter passports, and ISIS instructions from ISIS facilities, laptops, hard drives, and memory sticks. It has taken hundreds of witness statements from victims, perpetrators, detained fighters, defectors, insiders, witnesses, and other witnesses. CIJA has developed pretrial briefs and perpetrator profiles that are of a world-class quality.

In 2016, CIJA received 409 requests for assistance on cases from law enforcement agencies in many countries, including the Department of Homeland Security and FBI and works closely with both agencies. Yet, CIJA has received no financial support from the U.S. government.

H.R. 390 also directs the Secretary to work with foreign governments to ensure that they are including identifying information about suspected perpetrators in their security databases and security screening and are prosecuting perpetrators.

ISIS fighters in Iraq are being captured and detained in the battle for Mosul and beyond. Others are escaping the region and attempting to return to their home countries around the world. We should help ensure that in addition to being screened and prosecuted for terrorism, they are screened and prosecuted for atrocity crimes.

President Trump and Vice President Pence have strongly, publicly committed the Administration to providing relief to Christians, Yazidis, and other genocide survivors, and ensuring perpetrators are brought to justice. H.R. 390 supports this commitment and is a blueprint for implementation.

H.R. 390 has the bipartisan co-sponsorship of 46 members, support from a range of prominent Christian, Yazidi, religious freedom, and accountability organizations, and has been endorsed by all four former U.S. Ambassadors-at-Large for War Crimes Issues.

I especially want to acknowledge my co-author and good friend ANNA ESHOO. Her tireless efforts on behalf of Christians and other persecuted religious minorities, and the fantastic partnership with her and her staff on this bill, are a testament to the bi-partisanship of H.R. 390 and international religious freedom more broadly.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the great staff work of Nathaniel Hurd and Piero Toni in my office. Matt McMurray in ANNA ESHOO’s office. Doug Anderson and Joan Condon in the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Roger Mahan and Luke Murry in the Majority Leader’s Office. And Kelly Dixon who ultimately helped us get it to the floor.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Homeland Security Com-

mittee and as a member of the Congressional Refugee Caucus, I rise in strong support of H.R. 390, the “Iraq and Syria Genocide Emergency Relief and Accountability Act of 2017.”

This legislation makes clear that it is the policy of the United States to ensure that assistance for humanitarian, stabilization, and recovery needs is directed toward those individuals and communities with the greatest need, including those individuals from communities of religious and ethnic minorities, and communities of religious and ethnic minorities, that have been identified as being at risk of persecution, forced migration, acts of genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is a timely and important response to acts of genocide and other war crimes committed by ISIS in its continuing effort to subjugate the Yazidi religious minority in Syria and Iraq.

ISIS has targeted and continues to target Muslims, Jews, Sikhs, Christians, Yazidis and its reprehensible actions are reminiscent of what we have seen in some of the darkest periods of human history.

For example, according to reports of human rights watchgroups, Shiite Muslims have been killed by ongoing waves of ISIS bombings of Shiite neighborhoods, and Shiite members of Iraq’s security forces have been victims of mass ISIS executions.

ISIS is believed to be holding 3,500 people as slaves, and most of the enslaved are women and children from the Yazidi community.

ISIS claimed credit for the twin blasts that struck Christian Egyptian churches during Palm Sunday services, in which at least 47 Christians were murdered.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, in our own country we are witnessing an alarming increase in violence, bigotry, and acts of terror against members of many of our religious minorities:

1. Muslim college students have been shot and killed, execution-style, in their living room and outside of their mosques.

2. Jewish communities are struggling to deal with desecrated cemeteries and waves of bomb threats being called to their community centers and places of worship.

3. Two Sikh men were killed in New York City, a crime police declared to be a hate-shooting.

4. Nine African American parishioners were shot to death during Bible study at a Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina.

H.R. 390 aims to promote accountability in Iraq and Syria for the atrocities committed against the religious minorities living in those countries.

It also provides emergency relief for victims of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes in Iraq and Syria.

Specifically, the bill authorizes the providing of financial and technical assistance to those in need, as well as working with nongovernmental organizations with expertise in international criminal investigations and law to investigate and address crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes, and their constituent crimes, occurring in Iraq since January 2014.

H.R. 390 also authorizes United States aid agencies to provide assistance to entities determined to be capable of effectively managing and delivering recovery, humanitarian, or stabilization assistance to Iraqi and Syrian religious or ethnic minorities that have been victimized by ISIS.

Mr. Speaker, the crimes ISIS has committed against Iraqi and Syrian religious and ethnic minorities are horrific.

The victims of this campaign of terror are innocent and in dire need of humanitarian and stabilization assistance.

As the global leader and champion of human rights and human dignity, the United States has an obligation to lead the international effort to defeat ISIS and ameliorate the suffering caused by its heinous acts.

H.R. 390 is a welcome and positive step in the right direction and I urge all Members to join me in voting for this important legislation.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 390, the Iraq and Syria Genocide Emergency Relief and Accountability Act of 2017.

In March of 2016, Congress declared in unequivocal terms that the persecution of Christians, Yazidis, and other ethnic and religious minorities in Iraq and Syria by ISIS constituted genocide.

This was a seminal moment in the U.S. Congress because it's only the third time in history that Congress has declared a genocide. Unfortunately, the conditions for the tens of thousands of survivors of these crimes against humanity grow worse each day.

Mr. Speaker, we are witnessing the systematic extermination of Christians and other religious and ethnic minorities at the hands of ISIS.

And despite the fact that Congress has appropriated over \$1 billion in humanitarian aid to help these communities in Fiscal Year 2017, the money has not reached survivors because the only organizations focused solely on aiding survivors are religious groups, which the State Department will not provide assistance to.

For example, the Archdiocese of Erbil is currently providing food, housing, and medical care to more than 70,000 Christians who escaped death at the hands of ISIS. Even though the Archdiocese of Erbil is providing assistance to survivors at the center of this crisis, the State Department will not distribute U.S. assistance through religious organizations. H.R. 390 would resolve this ongoing problem.

The bill directs the Secretary of State and USAID to provide assistance directly to entities, including faith-based entities that are effectively providing assistance to genocide survivors or other persecuted religious and ethnic communities on the ground in Iraq and Syria. Importantly, the aid can only be used for humanitarian relief on the ground, not to support the general operations of the church or faith-based entity.

H.R. 390 also includes important provisions that will help the international community document the crimes against humanity that have been committed by ISIS, hold the perpetrators accountable, and ensure we learn from the horrors we have witnessed over the last six years so that we can one day prevent the next large-scale genocide from occurring.

I want to thank the bill's sponsor and my partner in this ongoing effort to help the tens of thousands of survivors of genocide in Iraq and Syria, Congressman CHRIS SMITH. He has been a tireless advocate on behalf of these persecuted communities and I commend him for the work he has done to get this bill through the House.

Thirteen months after the House and Senate took the important step to label these

crimes against humanity as genocide, my colleagues now have the opportunity to help bring an end to the suffering.

I urge my colleague to vote "YES" on H.R. 390.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 390, the Iraq and Syria Genocide Emergency Relief and Accountability Act.

For too long, the Middle East—the birth place of Christianity—has been the place where thousands of Christians have been led to their deaths. The Pew Research Center reports that Christians are the world's most persecuted faith community, with Middle Eastern Christians experiencing this most severely.

In 2012, President Obama declared what is happening to Christians in the Middle East as "genocide", but not much has been done to respond to this crisis.

This bill will provide the dire supports and safeguards that Christians and other religious minorities desperately need. Specifically, it gives prioritized consideration to Christians and other religious minorities in the Middle East for admission into the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, while keeping standard vetting procedures in place.

This is so important given that less than half of one percent of Syrians chosen for resettlement between 2011 and 2016 have been Christians.

H.R. 390 also supports entities that are conducting criminal investigations into the bad actors perpetrating violence against Christians and supports groups helping victims of genocide in the region.

Clearly, persecuted Christians in the Middle East desperately need our support. As a fellow Christian, I will keep working to bring attention to the failures of our current refugee program in helping these individuals, as well as promote efforts to provide resources and assistance to them in their time of need.

I applaud the passage of H.R. 390 and hope that the Senate will give it timely consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 390, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to provide emergency relief for victims of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes in Iraq and Syria, for accountability for perpetrators of these crimes, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING TERRORIST ATTACKS IN MANCHESTER, UNITED KINGDOM

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 355) condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks in Manchester, United Kingdom, on May 22, 2017, expressing heartfelt condolences, and reaffirming unwavering support for the

special relationship between our peoples and nations in the wake of these attacks, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 355

Whereas, on May 22, 2017, a terrorist triggered improvised explosive devices at the Manchester Arena following the conclusion of a concert by American recording artist Ariana Grande;

Whereas the blasts took the lives of at least 22 people, and seriously injured 59, many of whom were children;

Whereas British officials are continuing to investigate the bombing to determine whether it was perpetrated by a lone individual or by a terrorist network;

Whereas, on May 23, 2017, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) claimed responsibility for the attacks and threatened further attacks;

Whereas on June 3, 2017, three terrorists drove a van into pedestrians on London Bridge before committing multiple stabbing attacks against innocent bystanders in the Borough Market area of London;

Whereas British police quickly arrived at the scene and successfully ended the terrorist attack;

Whereas at least seven people were killed, and more than 48 wounded in the terrorist attack;

Whereas British police continue to investigate the incident to ensure that all involved in planning or supporting the attack are brought to justice;

Whereas the horrific attacks at the Manchester Arena and in London are the latest in a series of deadly assaults by ISIS in Europe in recent years;

Whereas British first responders reacted swiftly and heroically to both attacks, taking immediate measures to secure the areas and care for the wounded in ways that prevented further loss of life;

Whereas Prime Minister Theresa May stated on May 23, 2017, that "all acts of terrorism are cowardly attacks on innocent people but this attack stands out for its appalling, sickening cowardice, deliberately targeting innocent, defenseless children and young people" and paid tribute to "the spirit of Manchester and the spirit of Britain, a spirit that through years of conflict and terrorism has never been broken and will never be broken."

Whereas President Donald Trump condemned those who perpetrated the attacks and offered any and all assistance to the United Kingdom as it investigates these attacks and works to bring the terrorists to justice; and

Whereas the United Kingdom has been a steadfast ally to the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns the recent terrorist attacks in Manchester, United Kingdom, on May 22, 2017, and in London, United Kingdom, on June 3, 2017, and extends its deepest sympathies to all those affected by these tragedies;

(2) reaffirms the American commitment to the special relationship with the United Kingdom, and supports the efforts of the British Government to bring all those involved with these heinous attacks to justice;

(3) appreciates the significant efforts by the United Kingdom to combat terrorism;

(4) recognizes the persistent and growing threat posed by Islamist terrorist groups worldwide, and reaffirms the commitment of